

To the co-chairs of the appropriations committee,  
Senator Catherine Osten, Senator Paul Formica and Representative Toni Walker,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our experiences and our concerns with you. My family is resident in Glastonbury. Our daughter attends Glastonbury East Hartford Magnet School ([GEHMS](#)) and is currently in second grade.

It quickly became apparent to my husband and I just how much GEHMS lives up to its reputation. Not only does it offer high quality education, [but](#) as with all CREC schools, it brings so much more to the table than state schools, thanks to the additional programs it offers alongside the traditional curriculum. A strong focus on science makes places at GEHMS highly sought after. We are thankful every day for our daughter's place at GEHMS. When you walk through the doors of our school, it feels like a community. Everyone is working together with a common goal; to open every door for our children's future.

Our school is in a league of its own. The resources and programs available encourage hands-on discovery, inspire curiosity and offer all-round educational enrichment. Its cultural diversity further enhances what students gain from joining the GEHMS community. We are these days continually reminded of the absolute need for mutual respect, empathy, tolerance and acceptance. Our school encourages and nurtures [these critical values, forming bridges between our area's diverse communities and ethnicities. CREC is recognized nationally and internationally for these very reasons, with a radio program on CREC broadcast in the UK last year, holding it up as a beacon for integrated and transformational education.](#)

Sadly, these incredible opportunities are offered to a comparative handful of students. Every child, regardless of their zip code deserves the same opportunities to experience, explore and excel. Education is the absolute foundation of a child's life. It directly influences the life they will lead as an adult, the contribution they will make to their families and the effect that they will have in their communities and the economy overall. They will pass these attributes to their own children. The value of education cannot be overestimated. Every dollar cut from our budget will be to the detriment of our children.

Regarding the transportation budget, as a parent I find it so sad to think that a child outside of Glastonbury, or far away from any magnet school [for](#) which they may choose to apply, might not even enter the lottery simply because they [have no transportation option](#). This is a great shame. These families are being let down. That they forfeit the opportunity of joining a CREC school right off the bat, directly denies them opportunities in later life.

Members of Congress, before you make your decisions on how to move forward with our budgets, please extrapolate every dollar you may withhold or withdraw and see how much there is to be gained by continuing to support our magnet schools. Children's lives are in your hands. The significance of your decision and the impact on their education cannot be overestimated.

Governor Malloy promised not to increase taxes, but [this](#) policy is increasing the burden on local Towns to raise its revenue, [to cover](#) educational budgets. While [this](#) promise [may be kept](#), the net effect as an increase in taxes on voters due to the necessity for Towns to cover educational costs. CREC is held up as an example of a system that works nationally and internationally. With so much accomplished by CREC, and with a system that is clearly working and the envy of many governmental jurisdictions, you have the opportunity to continue to build on what CREC has achieved, rather than halt it in its tracks.

Sincerely,

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